

Notice of Nondiscrimination

Groundwork Rhode Island does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, disability, religion, sexual orientation, or gender identity/expression, in administration of its programs or activities. Groundwork Rhode Island does not harass, intimidate or retaliate against any individual or group because they have exercised their rights to participate in actions protected, or oppose action prohibited, by 40 C.F.R. Parts 5 and 7, or for the purpose of interfering with such rights. This includes, but is not limited to, discrimination, harassment, intimidation or retaliation in hiring, compensation, promotion, termination, and all other aspects of employment or participation in organizational activities.

Groundwork Rhode Island (GWRI) is committed to ensuring that no person is excluded or denied from admission or access to GWRI properties, programs, activities, services or employment, on the basis of characteristics protected by nondiscrimination laws implemented by 40 C.F.R. Parts 5 and 7 (Non-discrimination in Programs or Activities Receiving Federal Assistance from the Environmental Protection Agency), including Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended; Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973; the Age Discrimination Act of 1975; Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972; and Section 13 of the Federal Water Pollution Control Act Amendments of 1972 (hereinafter referred to collectively as the federal non-discrimination laws).

In addition GWRI is committed to ensuring that no one is denied an equal opportunity to participate in, receive benefits from, and receive access to any program or service receiving financial assistance from the Federal government, on the basis of characteristics protected by the federal non-discrimination laws implemented by Department of Agriculture Regulation 4330-2 and 7 CFR Subtitle A, Part 15 - Nondiscrimination, Subparts A and B.

Title VI prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color or national origin, including limited English proficiency, in federally funded programs. Nondiscrimination prohibitions have been further broadened and supplemented by related statutes, regulations and executive orders including:

- Title IX of the Education Amendments Act of 1972, which prohibits discrimination based on sex in education programs or activities (“Title IX”).
- Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (“Section 504”), and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, which prohibit discrimination based on disability.
- Age Discrimination Act of 1975, which prohibits discrimination based on age.
- Section 13 of the Federal Water Pollution Control Act Amendments of 1972, which prohibits discrimination based on sex involving a program or activity receiving financial assistance under the Clean Water Act.
- U.S. Department of Homeland Security regulation 6 C.F.R. Part 19, which prohibits discrimination based on religion in social service programs.



The State of Rhode Island employment and public accommodations statutes, implemented by the Rhode Island Commission for Human Rights, which was created and empowered in 1949 by Title 28, Chapter 5 of the General Laws of Rhode Island (R.I.G.L.), prohibit discrimination based on race, color, sex (including pregnancy and sexual harassment), disability, ancestral origin, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity/expression and age. The employment statute also prohibits discrimination on the basis of conviction status (questioning an applicant about his/her criminal record prior to an initial interview), with certain exceptions. GWRI is committed to ensuring that no person is excluded or denied from admission or access to GWRI properties, programs, activities, services or employment, on the basis of characteristics protected by these state nondiscrimination laws.

We also strive to provide reasonable language assistance services, such as interpretation and information written in non-English languages, to persons with limited English language proficiency to enable them to access our services across Rhode Island.

GWRI is committed to providing individuals with disabilities an equal opportunity to participate in and benefit from GWRI's employment, properties, programs, activities, and services. GWRI employees and job applicants with disabilities may request reasonable accommodations from GWRI that they believe will enable them to have equal opportunity to participate in hiring and employment. Individuals with disabilities may also request reasonable accommodations that they believe will allow them equal access to GWRI's programs and activities, including auxiliary aids and services for those with hearing, vision, and speech disabilities.

Amelia Rose, GWRI's Executive Director, is responsible for coordination of compliance efforts and receipt of inquiries concerning non-discrimination requirements and accessibility assistance. Please contact her at the phone number or email address below should these services be needed.

Point of Contact:

Amelia Rose
Executive Director – Nondiscrimination Coordinator
Groundwork Rhode Island
1005 Main Street, Unit 1223
Pawtucket, RI 02860
Phone: (401) 305-7174
Email: arose@groundworkri.org

Grievance Procedures

Any person or group of persons who believe that discrimination has occurred by GWRI based on race, color, national origin, disability, or any other protected category may file a written complaint with GWRI by contacting the Non-Discrimination coordinator, Amelia Rose, at the email address provided below.

1005 Main Street, Unit 1223, Pawtucket, RI 02860
Phone: (401) 305-7174 | Email: info@groundworkri.org
www.groundworkri.org

- Grievances must be submitted in writing within 60 days of the date the person filing the grievance becomes aware of the alleged discriminatory action. GWRI may be willing to waive the 60 calendar-day requirement if the complainant shows good cause and/or under reasonable circumstances.
- A complaint must be in writing, containing the name and address of the person filing it. The complaint must state the problem or action alleged to be discriminatory and the remedy or relief sought.
- If the complainant is unable to submit a written complaint, the Nondiscrimination Coordinator should be contacted. GWRI will make reasonable accommodations in its policies and procedures which are necessary to allow persons with disabilities or limited English proficiency full access to the complaint filing and investigative process.
- When we receive the complaint, GWRI will acknowledge that it has been received, review for jurisdiction based on the time period of the grievance and respond to the person submitting the complaint in writing.
- GWRI will reach out to the complainant and identify whether the issue can be resolved informally before launching an investigation. The Non-Discrimination Coordinator may attempt to conciliate and resolve the complaint through a mutually agreeable solution. Any such informal resolution must be signed by both the Non-Discrimination Coordinator and the complainant.
- If an informal resolution cannot be reached, the Executive Director (or her/his designee) shall promptly and fairly investigate the complaint using a preponderance of evidence standard. This investigation may be informal, but it will be thorough, affording all interested persons an opportunity to submit evidence relevant to the complaint. The investigation may include interviews of employees, other relevant witnesses, or others named in the complaint. The Executive Director will maintain the files and records relating to such grievances. To the extent possible, and in accordance with applicable law, the Executive Director will take appropriate steps to preserve the confidentiality of files and records relating to grievances and will share them only with those who have a need to know.
- The Non-Discrimination coordinator will issue a written decision on the grievance, based on a preponderance of the evidence, no later than 60 days after its filing, including a notice to the complainant of their right to pursue further remedies.
- The person filing the grievance may appeal the decision of the Non-Discrimination coordinator by writing to the GWRI Board of Directors within 15 days of receiving the decision. The appeal should be sent to the Executive Director who will transfer the appeal to the Board. The Board President shall issue a written decision in response to the appeal no later than 45 days after its filing.

It is against the law for GWRI to retaliate against anyone who takes action to oppose discrimination, files a grievance or participates in the investigation of a grievance in accordance



with the above authorities. Any claims of intimidation or retaliation related to the complaint process will be handled promptly and fairly pursuant to the above procedure and in the same manner as other claims of discrimination.

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